



News2 Note

February 2009

The Politics of Postsecular Religion: Mourning Secular Futures (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008) by **Ananda Abeysekara**, Interdisciplinary Studies, was selected as an Outstanding Academic Book by Choice.

Carol B. Brandt, Teaching and Learning/School of Education, and **Karl Kosko**, a doctoral student in Teaching and Learning/School of Education, published the chapter “The Power of the Earth is a Circle: Indigenous Science Education in North America” in *The World of Science Education: Handbook of Research in North America*, ed. Wolff-Michael Roth and Kenneth Tobin (Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2009), 389-408.

Toni Calasanti, Sociology, published “Gender and Class Relations in the Struggle for Old Age Security” in the *Journal of Aging, Humanities, and the Arts* 2 (2008): 238-50. The article appeared in the Special Section titled “Historical Perspectives on Older Women's Struggle for ‘Security’ in Old Age, which was edited by Calasanti and Ruth E. Ray.

Peter Doolittle, Learning Sciences and Technology/School of Education and director of the Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (CEUT), and College of Engineering faculty Bob Hendricks and Kathleen Meehan received a four-year National Science Foundation award to expand the Lab-in-a-Box program for electrical and computer engineering classes to reach online students and help Blacksburg students with after-hours questions. The Lab-in-a-Box is an inexpensive laboratory kit that allows students enrolled in a lecture-based beginning electrical engineering class to design, build, and test various DC and AC circuits at home. Meehan will serve as the principal investigator; Doolittle and Hendricks will be co-principal investigators. Doolittle will assist with the oversight of launching the online courses, which will be offered to students whose institutions currently do not offer a laboratory class.

Faculty in the School of Education were awarded a number of grants recently. Teaching and Learning faculty **Sara Kajder** and **David Hicks** received a CEUT Faculty Study Group Grant. Their project involves the establishment of an Arts and Humanities in Education Learning/Discovery/Engagement Group, whose initial purpose is to bring together three content areas in the field of teacher education to

promote interdisciplinary collaboration in the preparation and support of teachers who are ready, willing and able to use digital technologies in 21st century classrooms. One outcome of the group's work will be the production of an Art and Humanities Faculty Group Website. Kajder and Hicks also were awarded a Core Competency Grant from the Office of Academic Assessment. The project will serve as a catalyst for development of frameworks, tasks, and evaluation rubrics tied to the formative electronic portfolio at the program level. As the English education, history and social sciences, and music education faculty collaborate within the Digital Arts and Humanities inquiry group, the work will impact multiple programs and may serve as an assessment model for colleagues across the School of Education and the College for uses of the formative electronic portfolio for assessing critical thinking.

Susan Myers, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, was the recipient of an Assessment Education Grant from the Office of Academic Assessment. The primary research aim of the proposal is to identify the types of professional dispositions that are expected and nurtured in the Southwest Virginia Public Education Consortium members by both university supervisors and public school clinical teachers. The secondary goal is to support the creation of an instrument that will accurately measure professional dispositions in students who complete undergraduate and graduate programs at Virginia Tech.

Faculty and students from the School of Education partnered with high school and middle school students from across the country to witness the historic inauguration of President Barack Obama.

David Hicks, Teaching and Learning, organized the teaching field experience trip with the American Civics Center (ACC), a non-partisan civic education organization that brings thousands of secondary school students and teachers to the nation's capital each year for week-long educational programs to learn about history, government, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

Participating were the following from Curriculum and Instruction: master's students **Matthew Barrow**, **Kristen Callan**, **Paul Dolenc**, **Jennifer Mecca**, **Mary O'Mara**, **Ashley Payne**, **Hunter Simmons**, and **Joseph Wilder**; Ph.D. candidates **Melissa Lisanta** and **Darren Minarik**; and graduate assistant **Charlie Crabtree**. Minarik also served as an assistant with the trip given his role as the Curriculum Director at the ACC.

The VT team left for Washington, D.C., on January 17 and spent six days and five nights as Civics Center instructors. Each member of the history and social science education cohort was responsible for leading 15 to 20 youths. In preparation, Hicks' students completed two professional development sessions that focused on the American Civics Center methodology, learner-centered teaching strategies, and how to turn the historic sites of Washington into interactive civics and history classrooms.

A photo of the graduate students is available at <http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/spotlight.php?spot=382>.

The numerous national awards received by Department of English faculty **Fred D'Aguiar**, **Ed Falco**, **Nikki Giovanni**, **Bob Hicok**, **Daniel Mosser**, **David Radcliffe**, **Steven Salaita**, **Paul Sorrentino**, and **Ernest Sullivan** over the last year are highlighted at <http://www.vt.edu/spotlight/achievement/2009-01-26-english/2009-01-26-english.html>, a Spotlight on Achievement by College Communications Manager **Jean Elliott** that currently is featured on the Virginia Tech homepage.

The prose poem/short fiction titled "Meditation on Loss" by **Ed Falco**, English, won *The Southern Review's* Robert Penn Warren Prize for Poetry, awarded annually for "the best work to appear in [its] pages." Short fiction works are indistinguishable from prose poems and often published as poems or prose poems.

As a member of the Board of Directors of WiRED International, **Elizabeth Fine**, Interdisciplinary Studies, received notification that the University of California, Berkeley, selected WiRED International as the School of Public Health's 2009 Organizational Public Health Hero. Berkeley recognized WiRED for "its achievements in using information technology to provide up-to-date health education and medical information to individuals in developing, post-conflict, and isolated regions of the world." The award will be presented on March 18, 2009. For more information see http://www.wiredinternational.org/berkeley_award_Oct2008.html.

Jim Garrison, Teaching and Learning/School of Education, served as a visiting scholar at the University of Cologne, Germany, for ten days in November. He taught several seminars and collaborated on a book tentatively titled *John Dewey's Philosophy of Education – an Introduction*, to appear in German later this year. In late January Garrison was an invited keynote speaker at the international conference *John Dewey's thought between psychology, philosophy, and pedagogy. Interdisciplinary perspectives*; his presentation was titled "Deweyan Interdisciplinary Inquiry: Overcoming the Diremptions of Modernity and the Excesses of Postmodernity."

LuAnn R. Gaskill, chair of Apparel, Housing, and Resource Management, received funding for "Economic and Social Development in Practice: Research Studies in the Southern Africa Textile and Apparel Small Business Sector" from the Virginia Tech Office of International Affairs (OIA) and the Office of International Research, Education, and Development (OIRE)

University Distinguished Professor of English **Nikki Giovanni** won an American Book Award for *The Collected Poetry of Nikki Giovanni: 1968-1998* (HarperCollins). The American Book Awards, established in 1978 by the Before Columbus Foundation, recognize outstanding literary achievement from the entire spectrum of America's diverse literary community.

Celia Ray Hayhoe, Apparel, Housing, and Resource Management, was an invited presenter at the U.S. Department of Treasury's Relationship Finance Summit in January 2009. The summit drew researchers and others from across the nation, including AHRM faculty **Irene Leech** and **Bruce Brunson**.

The poetry of **Bob Hicok**, English, has garnered extensive attention recently in a number of venues. Hicok's poem, "As I was saying," was published in the December 8, 2008, issue of *The New Yorker*. In addition, his poetry appears in *The Best American Poetry 2008* and has been selected for *The Best American Poetry 2009* (forthcoming September 2009); Hicok has now been selected five times for this prestigious collection. Finally, Hicok has been included in *The Pushcart Prize XXXIII: Best of the Small Presses (2009 Edition)*.

The Higher Education (HED) Program in the School of Education recently awarded three of its graduate students the Don G. Creamer Research Award; they are: **Ian Austin** for his project "Understanding Higher Education Governance Restructuring: The Case of the University of the West Indies"; **Martha Glass** for her work on "The College Transition Experience of First-year College Students with a Diagnosed Mental Illness"; and **Ane Johnson** for her project titled "Mobilizing Higher Education for Development in Africa: A Case Study of the Association of African Universities." The Creamer Research Award fund was established in 2005 to honor the work and distinguished career of Don. G. Creamer, a

driving force behind the Higher Education program for more than 20 years. The competitive awards support outstanding graduate research projects for students in the Higher Education Program. The selection committee included **Don Creamer**, Professor Emeritus in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies/College of Education, Bethany Flora, Office of the Provost, and chair **Diana Ridgwell**, Director of Student Development, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences.

The Highty-Tighties, under the direction of Major **George McNeill**, Music, were invited by the Presidential Inaugural Committee to perform at "We are one: The Obama Inaugural Celebration at the Lincoln Memorial." This was the opening celebration for the 56th Presidential Inaugural; it was presented exclusively by HBO on Sunday, January 18. The event was free and open to the public and served as a kick-off for the most open and accessible inauguration in history.

Michael Hughes, Sociology, with Steven A. Tuch, published "Racial attitudes in the United States at the start of the twenty-first century" in *Sovremenata Vamerikanska Sociologija: Vo Cest na Robert K. Merton* (Contemporary American Sociology: In Memory of Robert King Merton), ed. Petre Georgievski (Skopje, Macedonia: Faculty of Philosophy Press, 2008), 141-49.

Summer without Children (2005) by **Stevan Jackson**, Interdisciplinary Studies, will be referenced in an upcoming PBS documentary on polio. The book, published in 2005, presents an oral history of the 1950 polio epidemic in Wytheville. The epidemic will be featured in the February 2 episode of the *American Experience* on PBS.

Grace Y. Kao, Interdisciplinary Studies, published "The Ethics of Citation and Proposals for Change" as part of a roundtable discussion on "Managing Diversity in Academe" in the *Journal of the Society of Christians Ethics* 28.2 (Fall/Winter 2008): 76-84. In addition, at the annual meeting of the Society of Christian Ethics in January 2009 she was elected to be the co-convenor of the Asian/Asian-American Working Group.

Christine Kiebuszinska, Professor of English, published "Postmemory in Austrian Post-Holocaust Literature: Thomas Bernhard's *Heldenplatz* and Elfriede Jelinek's *Totenauberg*" in *Trajectories of Memory: Intergenerational Representations of the Holocaust in History and the Arts*, ed. Christina Guenther and Beth Griech-Poelle (Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008): 313-31.

Miriam B. Larson and **Barbara Lockee**, both from Learning Sciences and Technologies/School of Education, published "Preparing instructional designers for different career environments: A case study" in *Educational Technology Research and Development* 57,1 (2009): 1-24. *ETR&D* is the top research journal in instructional technology.

Irene Leech, Apparel, Housing, and Resource Management, has been appointed to represent the Consumer Federation of America on the Federal Communication Commission's Consumer Advisory Committee. Currently, the group is addressing the change from analog to digital television.

Jay Mancini, professor of Human Development and senior research fellow at the Institute for Society, Culture and Environment (ISCE), was named the January 2009 Institute for Advanced Biometrics and Social Systems Studies (IABS3) Featured Researcher. Established in 2008 under the umbrella of Oak

Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU), the IABS3 is a think-tank and research center designed to address security concerns related to terrorist threats and natural disasters. The Institute is a partnership between ORAU and Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) that leverages research expertise from the seven ORNL partner universities – Georgia Tech, Duke, University of Virginia, Vanderbilt, North Carolina State, Virginia Tech, and Florida State - as well as from the science and technology capabilities of ORAU's 119 member institutions and ORAU's network of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Educational Institutions.

Mancini has been working with the institute as a principal investigator on a project titled "Providing Access to Resilience-Enhancing Technologies for Disadvantaged Communities and Vulnerable Populations (PARET)"; his role has been to consult on community social organization and community capacity building. He will present the PARET Project research findings at the 2009 World Conference on Disaster Management in Toronto in June. More information can be found at <http://www.iabs3.org/jan-09-featured-researcher.html>.

Several Department of Music faculty performed at recent concerts in Squires Recital Salon hosted by the department. The Twelfth Annual Virginia Tech Honor Band was held January 23-25, with more than 500 students from 150 schools in seven states in attendance; participants were nominated by their band director and spent the weekend in rehearsals, clinics, and performances on campus. **Travis Cross** conducted the final concert, open to the public, which was held on January 25 in Burruss Auditorium. On January 30 "An Evening of Music by J.S. Bach" in featured **James Bryant**, harpsichord, **Tracy Cowden**, harpsichord, **Wallace Easter**, horn, **David Jacobsen**, flute, and **Theodore Sipes**, baritone. This year's annual Bach concert included an aria from the B Minor Mass, flute and harpsichord sonatas, and a selection of Preludes and Fugues from Book II of the Well-Tempered Clavier. **Alan Weinstein** performed on January 31 and February 1 with the Kandinsky Piano Trio as part of the University Chamber Music series. The trio consists of Benedict Goodfriend, violin, Weinstein, cello, and Elizabeth Bachelder, piano. The performance featured music of Joseph Haydn, Franz Schubert, and John D'earth.

Sociology faculty **James Hawdon** and **John Ryan**, chair, published, with co-authors Pekka Räsänen and Atte Oksanen, "Paikallistason yhteisöllisyys massaväkivallan jälkeen Suomessa ja Yhdysvalloissa" (Community Cohesion After Mass Violence in Finland and the United States) in *Sociologia: The Finnish Journal of Sociology* 45,4 (2008): 347-53.

Kevin Stainback, Sociology, published "Social Contacts and Race/Ethnic Job Matching" in *Social Forces* 87,2 (2008): 857-86.

Jarreau Anthony Williams, a senior in Theatre Arts, has been nominated by Virginia Tech as one of 31 students to be included in the 2009 edition of "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges." The "Who's Who" program is a nationally recognized institution of the American academic community; it was designed to recognize outstanding academic achievement and student leadership regardless of one's financial ability to participate.

Alumni Highlight

Christopher Belluzzo, a 1997 Virginia Tech graduate in Sociology, graduated in 2007 from Northwestern Health Sciences University in Minnesota with a postgraduate degree of Doctor of Chiropractic. He recently returned to Blacksburg and has opened the South Main Chiropractic Clinic. Congratulations, Dr. Belluzzo, and welcome back to the Virginia Tech neighborhood.

Please submit items for inclusion in upcoming **News2Note** newsletters to Associate Dean Debra Stoudt at dstoudt@vt.edu.